

Explanation of sample ExcelAssign problem

You should read this through once and then open Excel and work through it.

The numbers used here are just one randomly chosen set; yours will probably be different.

The problem is to make a spreadsheet to compute the values of $y = ax^2 + bx + c$, where a , b , and c are the numbers given in this picture:

	A	B	C	D	E	F
1	a	b	c	x	y	
2	-4.23	4.45	-0.91	12.11		
3					8.83	
4					0.002	
5					-21	
6						

You're supposed to do these calculations for the values of x given in column D in the picture and place the results in column E. So, for example, what you want in cell E2 is the value of $ax^2 + bx + c$ where $a = -4.23$, $b = 4.45$, $c = -0.91$, and $x = 12.11$. That is, the formula you place in that cell should compute

$$(-4.23)12.11^2 + (4.45)12.11 + (-0.91)$$

Now a is in cell A2, b is in cell B2, c is in cell C2, and the value of x for this row is in cell D2, so a formula that would do what you want is

$$=A2*D2*D2+B2*D2+C2$$

You would put this formula into cell E2.

This isn't completely satisfactory, however. For one thing, the problem insists that the values be rounded to two decimal places. This is easy to fix; just change the formula to

$$=round(A2*D2*D2+B2*D2+C2, 2)$$

This formula isn't completely satisfactory either, though, because if it is copied and pasted into cell E3, for example, Excel will change A2 to A3, B2 to B3, and C2 to C3, and there aren't any values in cells A3, B3, and C3. On the other hand, it will also change D2 to D3, which is exactly what you want. The way to fix this is to use dollar signs to tell Excel what not to change:

$$=round(\$A\$2*D2*D2+\$B\$2*D2+\$C\$2, 2)$$

This formula can be copied into cells E3–E5 and will give the correct results.

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Remember that ExcelAssign is extremely picky about details. Make sure you do exactly what you're told, put everything exactly where it is supposed to be, and give your file exactly the right name.

On file names: if your copy of Excel is set to save with the .xls extension and you name your file Problem1.xls, Excel will change it to Problem1.xls.xls, which will not work. To avoid this, be sure to choose the .xlsx file type from the "Save as type" dropdown list that appears below the field into which you type file names when saving.